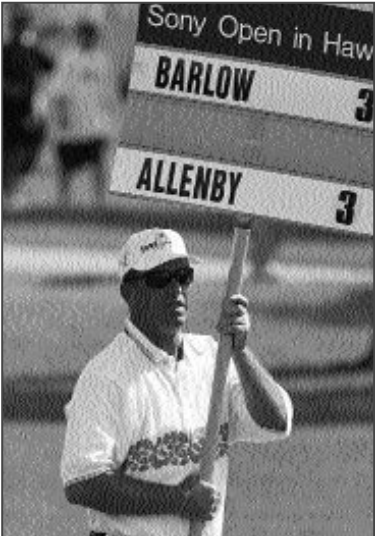


LIBERTY CALL

PGA tour (right) golfers Jesper Parnevik (left) and Paul Azinger wait on the first tee to begin their final round at the Sony Open in Hawaii. MSC Phillip Colgan (below) from the Navy Submarine Support Command volunteered his time as a score standard. This was Colgan's first year as a volunteer.



PGA golfers visit Pearl, participate in Sony Open

By PH2 Chad McNeeley
NAVY REGION HAWAII

The Navy got to show its stuff recently when Five Professional Golfer Association (PGA) Tour golfers visited Pearl Harbor last week while they were in town for the Sony Open in Hawaii at Waialae Country Club.

Tour golfers Billy Andrade, Fred Funk, Ernie Els, Steve Jones and Jeff Sluman were able to take a boat tour of Pearl Harbor and the USS Arizona Memorial. The golfers were in town for the annual Sony Open in Hawaii at Waialae Country Club. Sluman was the defending champion of the event, and Els was fresh off a shootout with Tiger Woods at the Mercedes Championships at Kapalua's Plantation on Maui.

But it wasn't one of the Navy's guests that ran away with the \$522,000 first prize. Paul Azinger chased away seven years worth of demons by returning to the winners circle again at the Sony Open in Hawaii.

Azinger was the wire-to-wire leader in the PGA Tours first full field event of the season. Winning the event by seven strokes over Australian Stuart Appleby.

"I feel terrific," Azinger said. "I had some anxiety when I came here. I didn't know what to expect. But I was determined not to get ahead of myself."

Azinger, won for the first time since the 1993 PGA Championship. He was diagnosed with lymphoma in his right shoulder in December 1993 and missed most of the next season. Not sure if he would ever compete again, Azinger began a long and difficult struggle back to the top of the PGA tour elite. Just when it seemed like it was coming together, he received a devastating call that a plane carrying three of his best friends and business associates had crashed in South Dakota, killing all aboard.

Then he wondered if it all mattered anymore. But "Zinger" overcame the adversary and nearly lapped the field in his seven-stroke victory.

"It's hard to put into words the feelings I have," he said. "I want to scream and yell, but I also have subdued feelings. I realize so many of my good friends are hurting right now. This is for all of them."

To make any PGA Tour a success, volunteers are needed at every aspect of the event. From security to refreshments and food, a PGA Tour stop wouldn't function properly without the scores of volunteers that come out to help. Master Chief Personnelman (AW) Bev Brennan, Command Master Chief of VPU-2, gave her time for 17 years.

"I started coming out back when the event was still known as the Hawaiian Open," she said.

Her first assignment was as accompanying the players as a standard, letting them know where their scores stand as they progressed through their round. Today, she's assistant chairman of the standard's committee, overseeing the entire volunteer's that carry the sign's for the 144-man field. But to give back to the community is the real reason she participates year after year. The Sony Open in Hawaii is the flagship event of the Friends of Hawaii Charities.

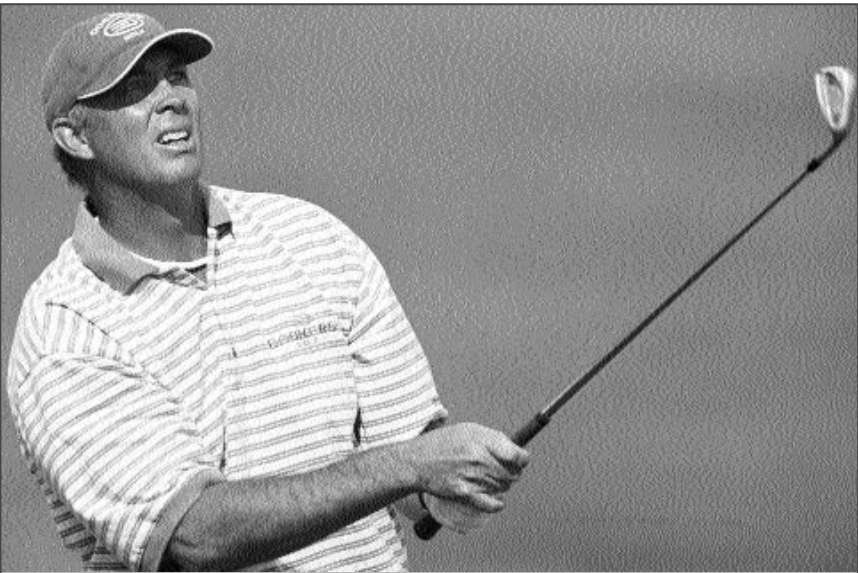
President Tony Guerrero explains, "Initiated and serviced on a volunteer basis by community leaders, the Friends' collective energy is focused toward developing long-range, multi-faceted funding for the purpose of helping to meet educational and health needs of Hawaii's women, children and youth."

Chief Operations Specialist Jay Fallon, from Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATG-MIDPAC) a second year volunteer explained what brought him out, "I love golf, and you can't find a better seat in the house, than out on the course."



Defending Sony Open champion Jeff Sluman (center) and his wife Linda get a tip from BMCM(SW) Felise Tupulao on steering the boat during their cruise around Pearl Harbor and to the Arizona Memorial.

2000 Sony Open in Hawaii champion (below) Paul Azinger kisses the trophy from his victory in the tournament. This was Azinger's first win in over seven years, after being diagnosed and overcoming cancer.



PGA tour golfer Tom Lehman watches his shot during the final round of the Sony Open in Hawaii at Waialae Country Club on Sunday. Lehman finished tied for sixth, 11 shots back of winner Paul Azinger.

Photos by PH2 Chad McNeeley